

Esprit Orchestra
Alex Pauk • Music Director and Conductor



Zefiro torna

Sunday, January 21, 1996
Jane Mallett Theatre • St. Lawrence Centre

Borden & Elliot

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by Rivka Golani.*

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PROGRAMME

Esprit Orchestra
Alex Pauk • Conductor

Zefiro torna

Sunday, January 21, 1996 • 8:00 p.m.

Jane Mallett Theatre • St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts

Rivka Golani (viola) *

Concordanza, 1971

Sofia Gubaidulina (Russia)

Slowly I Turn, 1995
concerto for viola and orchestra

Larry Lake (Canada)

1. *Refractions*
2. *Anakreonism*
3. *Reflections*
4. *Analects*

WORLD PREMIERE **

INTERMISSION

Zefiro torna, 1994

John Rea (Canada)

Awaking the Winds, 1993

Claude Baker (United States)

*Rivka Golani's performance is presented by **Borden & Elliot**.

***Slowly I Turn* is an Esprit commission made possible through the financial assistance of the **Laidlaw Foundation**.

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Concordanza Sofia Gubaidulina

"To my mind the ideal relationship between traditional and new compositional techniques is one in which the artist has mastered both. . . but in a way which makes it appear that she is taking note of neither. . . There are composers who construct their works very consciously; I am one of those who 'cultivate' them. For this reason everything I have assimilated forms, as it were, the roots of a tree - and the work its branches and leaves. One can perhaps describe them as new, but they are leaves nonetheless, and seen in this way they are always traditional and old."

Sofia Gubaidulina

A composition for chamber ensemble, *Concordanza* was premiered in Prague in 1971, the same year it was written. The word "concordanza" means agreement or harmony. The title, *Concordanza*, is not just a programmatic indicator, but a way of pointing to the dramaturgical or formal idea behind the piece itself.

Concord is illustrated on the level of articulation types: in the *legato*, in the flow of the voices without punctuation by rests, and - as a quiet climax in the centre of the composition - in the dialogue between the double bass and the *flageolet* melody of the violin.

The opposite, "discordanza", is exhibited in the *staccato* of the winds, *pizzicato* of the strings and in the muddled passages, such as the double bass solo after the first *legato* section.

Discord also manifests itself in march rhythms, in *trills* and *tremolos* and in the hissing articulated by the musicians. These two opposites - "cordanza" and "discordanza" interpenetrate and are transformed amid their mutual influence.

Slowly I Turn Larry Lake

Slowly I Turn is a concerto for viola and orchestra. It is based on material from a piece that I wrote for Rivka Golani some years ago. That work was written for viola, live electronics and percussion. For years, Rivka has been asking me to write another work based on the material from the electronic version but using acoustic instruments. I resisted for one reason or another, but finally Rivka and Alex Pauk got together and called my bluff. This is the result, and this work is dedicated to both Rivka and Alex. It's their fault that it happened.

The original piece was written at a point in my life when I was first hearing the footsteps of Father Time. This period is often referred to as the beginning of middle age - the mid-life crisis. I didn't exactly go through a crisis (that came later), but certain things in my life changed. One of these was my musical aesthetic.

For some time, I had been writing textural music with large, sweeping gestures in clusters. Prior to that, I

had, as did most students of my vintage, written serial music - the more dissonant the better. Suddenly, I found myself not believing in either of these approaches.

So *Slowly I Turn* is in a way a search for a voice. It quotes a number of musical styles: early twentieth-century Viennese expressionism and Victorian parlour music being two of the most noticeable. There is a conceit: the harmonisation of the row of Schoenberg's *Piano Concerto*. But there is only one quotation, and that is mainly restricted to the harmony. It's the Hugo Wolf song *Anakreons Grab*. The Wolf snippet becomes the centre of gravity of the work.

But the overall aesthetic of *Slowly I Turn* comes from three gentlemen who have helped shape my philosophy of life, the Messrs. Howard and Fine: "Slowly I turned, step by step. . . "

Larry Lake

Zefiro torna John Rea

Zefiro torna was commissioned by Esprit Orchestra. It premiered in December, 1994 and is dedicated by John Rea to Mario Bertoncini, inventor, pianist and composer of aeolian music. About *Zefiro torna*, Rea has written:

"Sometimes the wind operates in magical, sometimes in terrifying ways, be it the storms at sea and on land . . . or in the adaptive geometry of a musical composition performed for the first time in an elegant drawing-room or aristocratic *Kammermusiksaal*. But the most mysterious place for the

wind to work its wonders is in the human heart, for storms are located here as well.

"The title of my composition makes reference to the sonnet of the same name written by Francesco Petrarca (his first on the death of his beloved Laura) and set almost three hundred years later as a five-voice madrigal by Claudio Monteverdi:"

Zephyr returns and brings back beautiful days and flowers and grass, his sweet companions, and warbling swallows, lamenting nightingales, and Spring, milk-white and scarlet.

The meadows smile, the sky is blue again, Jupiter regards his daughter with delight, earth, air and water are filled with love, and every animal renews its courtship.

But for me, alas, the heaviest sighs return, drawn from the depths of my heart by the one who took its key with her to heaven;

and birdsong, and the flowers of the field, and the sweet sincerity of lovely women are as a desert and pitiless wild beasts.

"Monteverdi's music becomes for me a kind of *cantus firmus* which, during the course of its journey through my composition, engages in a dialogue with other musics, with other ancient winds of a more ominous nature, finally to emerge just at that moment when the gentle and agreeable wind Zephyr returns . . . again."

John Rea

Awaking the Winds **Claude Baker**

Awaking the Winds was originally commissioned by the Saint Louis Symphony and was premiered by that orchestra on May 14, 1993. Speaking in advance of the premiere, Baker said that "despite the rather evocative nature of the title, the music was composed without any programmatic intent. Consequently I am rather at a loss as to what to say about it that would be meaningful to a first-time listener. Perhaps it would be more appropriate, in view of the work's *raison d'être*, to describe what it is not." *Awaking the Winds* was untitled at the time Baker wrote the following:

"My music in recent years has often been highly programmatic, typically drawing its inspiration from literary sources. [*Awaking the Winds*] is, on the other hand, decidedly 'absolute,' that is, it contains no extramusical associations.

"Musical borrowing has also played a significant role in my instrumental compositions for more than a decade. The tonal language of those pieces involving quotations [by such composers as, for example, Britten, Mahler, Stravinsky, Penderecki and

Schoenberg] has been determined in large measure by the tonality of the borrowed fragments around which the entire work or a single section was built. Thus my music has tended to be quite eclectic, mixing atonal passages with those based firmly in the major-minor tonal system. [*Awaking the Winds*] utilizes no conscious quotations, and the tonality - best, if vaguely, described as 'freely chromatic' - is consistent throughout.

"Past pieces have been characterized by a delicacy of gesture, a sensitivity to timbral subtleties and an 'eastern' approach to the handling of time and space. As a consequence, they have been essentially monophonic and have relied heavily on a large and exotic collection of percussion instruments to initiate and sustain events. By comparison, [*Awaking the Winds*] is primarily polyphonic in conception and employs no percussion whatever, not even timpani.

"Finally, recent works have frequently consisted of a series of individual and relatively short movements, each of which was complete in itself. [*Awaking the Winds*], however, is a single-movement composition dominated by several diverse ideas that evolve organically throughout.

"Such a radical departure from an aesthetic I have long embraced by no mean implies a repudiation of my earlier efforts. Because of my current position with the St. Louis Symphony [Baker is Composer-in-Residence], I have a unique opportunity to investigate compositional techniques and procedures that, while certainly not innovative, present new challenges for me in my growth as a composer."

Claude Baker

BIOGRAPHIES

Rivka Golani Viola

Rivka Golani is recognized as one of the greatest violists of all time. Her contributions to the advancement of viola technique have already given her a place in the history of the instrument and have been a source of inspiration not only to other players but to many composers who have been motivated by her mastery to write specially for the instrument. More than 180 pieces have so far been written for Golani, including 27 concertos - a record matched by no other violist in history.

Golani's awesome technique, riveting stage presence, and superbly sensitive musicianship have made her a favourite with music-lovers and critics alike. She performs as a soloist with the world's greatest orchestras: Boston Symphony, Royal Concertgebouw, Berlin Radio Symphony, Bern Symphony, BBC Symphony, BBC Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, Israel Philharmonic, Tokyo Metropolitan, Montreal Symphony, Toronto Symphony and many others. Her appearances throughout the world bring ecstatic reviews, enthusiastic and loyal audiences - and a flood of return engagements.

Golani is also a painter of distinction and has worked closely with composers as a visual artist in presenting multi-media performances of works for the viola. Exhibitions of her work have been held throughout Israel, and in Toronto, Berlin, Bad Kissingen, Ottawa, Exeter and London.



Rivka Golani, Viola

Claude Baker Composer

Claude Baker received his Ph.D. from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where his principal composition teachers were Samuel Adler and Warren Benson.

As a composer, Baker has received a number of professional honours, including two Kennedy Center Friedheim Awards; the Eastman-Leonard and George Eastman Prizes; a Manuel de Falla Prize (Madrid); BMI-SCA and ASCAP awards; residencies at Yaddo (Saratoga Springs, New York) and the MacDowell Colony (New Hampshire) and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts; the

Indiana Arts Commission; the Kentucky Arts Council, the New York State Council on the Arts and Rockefeller Foundation. His music has been performed by the orchestras of Saint Louis, San Francisco, Atlanta, Pittsburgh and Louisville, as well as by the New York Philharmonic, the Orquesta Nacional de España and the Orquesta Sinfonica de RTV Española. His works are published by MMB Music and Carl Fischer, Inc. and recorded on the ACA, Gasparo and Louisville First Edition labels.

Baker has served on the faculties of the University of Georgia, the University of Louisville and the Eastman School of Music, and is currently Professor of Composition in the School of Music at Indiana University, Bloomington. At the beginning of the 1991-92 concert season, Baker was appointed Composer-in-Residence of the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, a position he continues to hold.

Sofia Gubaidulina Composer

Sofia Gubaidulina was born in Chistopol in the Tatar Republic in 1931. She studied piano and composition, graduating from the Kazan Conservatory in 1954. Until 1959, she studied composition at the Moscow Conservatory with Nikolai Peiko (Shostakovich's assistant) and then did postgraduate work under Vissarion Shebalin. She has been an active composer since 1963.

In 1975, together with Viktor Suslin and Vyacheslav Artyomov, Gubaidulina founded the *Astreya Ensemble*, which

specialized in improvising on rare Russian, Caucasian, Central Asian and East Asian folk and ritual instruments. These unexplored sounds and timbres - and ways of experiencing musical time - had a profound influence on her creative work. (After an interval of many years, Gubaidulina and Suslin have recently revived the idea of the *Astreya Ensemble*.)

Since the early 1980's Gubaidulina's works have been performed widely in western countries and, along with Alfred Schnittke and Edison Denisov, she is considered one of the leading representatives of new music in the former Soviet Union. This is reflected in the number of major commissions she has received (eg., BBC and the Berlin Festival) and in the availability of her music on several compact discs.

Gubaidulina's awards include: the Prix de Monaco (1987); the Koussevitzky International Record Award (1989 and 1994); the Premio Franco Abbiato (1991), the Russian State Prize (1992) and many others.

Although Gubaidulina's education and background are Russian, it is important to bear in mind the significance of her Tatar origins. She is not, however, a Romantic nationalist, and her compositional mastery enables her to utilize contemporary techniques evolved in Europe and the U.S. - though in a wholly individual manner.

Gubaidulina is a member of the Akademie der Künste in Berlin and of the Freie Akademie der Künste in Hamburg, where she has lived since 1992.

Larry Lake Composer

Larry Lake is an award-winning composer, performer, broadcaster and writer. He has worked as a freelance composer since 1975. In 1971, together with David Jaeger, David Grimes and James Montgomery, he co-founded the Canadian Electronic Ensemble, and has been its Artistic Director since 1976. This year the group celebrates its 25th anniversary. Lake holds a Ph.D. in Musicology from the University of Toronto and Master's Degrees in Music and Education from the University of Miami.

Lake's music has been performed live around the world, broadcast in over 35 countries and released on six record labels distributed worldwide. His music is commissioned widely by soloists and groups throughout the United States and Canada.

As a synthesizer performer Lake has appeared throughout Europe and North America and has been a featured soloist with such orchestras in Canada as the Toronto Symphony, the Vancouver Symphony and the Orchestre Métropolitain de Montréal, plus such groups as Vancouver New Music, Arraymusic, ACREQ and Music Inter Alia.

Lake has won many awards in the fields of broadcasting, record production and writing from the Canadian Music Council, the Major Armstrong Foundation and the New York Broadcasting Awards. He has also been nominated on four occasions for JUNO Awards.

Larry Lake has taught at the University of Toronto, York University, Sir

George Brown College and the University of Miami. His writings have been published in a number of Canadian and international publications.

Lake is the host of CBC Stereo's *Two New Hours*, Canada's national new music programme. Tonight he is serving in that capacity, hosting a live coast-to-coast broadcast from the Winnipeg New Music Festival. He deeply regrets not being here for the premiere of *Slowly I Turn*.

John Rea Composer

In addition to being one of Canada's most distinguished composers, John Rea is an active teacher, writer and concert producer. The recipient of numerous awards and commissions, Rea has written music in several genres: solo, chamber, music-theatre, orchestra, ballet, choral, opera and electronic music. His music has been heard widely throughout Canada, the United States and Europe.

Among his recent premieres are a re-orchestration, for 21 players, of Alban Berg's opera *Wozzeck* for the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne (NEM) in Banff (August, 1995) and Montreal (September, 1995); *Einer nach dem Andern!*, for the chamber orchestra Ensemble Musique Nouvelle of Liège (Belgium, October, 1994); *Débâcle*, also for the NEM (a Radio Canada television film production about five composers - *La suite montréalaise* - February, 1993); *Canto di Beatrice*, for two sopranos and two cellos, after a text by Dante (Italy, July, 1992); a melodrama, *Une Fleur du mal*, for

soprano Marie-Danielle Parent, with clarinet, cello and percussion, after texts by Poe, Baudelaire and Sappho (Montreal, May, 1992) and a string quartet, *Objets Perdus*, for the Arditti Quartet (Toronto, March, 1992).

Rea lectures and publishes widely on the subject of twentieth-century music. Since 1973, the year he moved to Montreal, Rea has taught composition and music theory at McGill University, where (from 1986 to 1991) he was Dean of the Faculty of Music.

Rea was a founding member of the Montreal new music society *Les Événements du Neuf* (1978 to 1990) and has been a member of the Board of Directors and the artistic committee of the Société de Musique Contemporaine de Québec (SMCQ) since 1982.

In both 1981 and 1992 Rea was awarded the prestigious Governor-General's prize (*Prix Jules-Léger*) for new chamber music.

Alex Pauk Conductor

As both conductor and composer, Alex Pauk has been a leading exponent of new music in Canada since graduating from the University of Toronto Faculty of Music in 1971, where he received degrees in Music as well as Music Education. In addition, Pauk participated in the Ontario Arts Council Conductor's Workshop for two years, then continued his studies in Tokyo, at the Toho Gakuen School of Music, and in Europe.

In the early 70's, Pauk settled in Vancouver, being named Vancouver's Musician of the Year in 1975. There, he helped establish the new music group Days Months and Years to Come, for which he was Music Director and Conductor until 1979.

Prior to his move to Vancouver, Pauk was instrumental in establishing ArrayMusic in Toronto and was its first conductor.

Pauk returned to Toronto in 1980 and founded Esprit Orchestra in 1983. In his role as Music Director and Conductor, Pauk is committed to the development of a Canadian musical literature, and this commitment has lead to Esprit's commissioning of over 40 new works by over 35 Canadian composers. Pauk's work as Esprit's Music Director involves a strong role in the development of the orchestra's successful *Toward a Living Art* education programme.

Pauk was Co-Chair for the ISCM World Music Days held in Toronto and Montréal in 1984. In 1986 he was Music Director and Conductor of the Satori Festival of New Canadian Music held in Winnipeg.

As a composer, Pauk has written over 35 concert works and has received commissions from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, New Music Concerts (Toronto), Vancouver New Music Society, The Québec Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony, leading Indian dancer/choreographer Menaka Thakkar, harpist Erica Goodman and many others. He has also composed for film, television, radio and music theatre.

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Paul Zevenhuizen
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James Aylesworth

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